

Seven young birds in August had the 1st and 2d primaries more or less white, and the last four pure white. The other primaries were plumbeous, mottled on web-margins with ochraceous.

The tails of the half-grown birds were banded and mottled with brown like the back; showing a bleaching to white along the centres of the outer feathers. One bird—an adult male, taken the last of June—has a black centre spot at the end of an outer tail feather.

During winter the sexes keep in separate flocks. At least so I judge from noting that where two or more birds were taken from a flock, all were of the same sex.—FRANK M. DREW, *Bunker Hill. Ill.*

Eskimo Curlew at San Diego, Cal.—One individual of this species (*Neminius borealis*) was attracted by my decoys and shot, September, 1883. The same day I shot a Hudsonian Curlew from out of a mixed flock of shore birds. Both were new to me at the time, although since the Hudsonian has been seen quite frequently, and was in April, this year, abundant in good-sized flocks, feeding on a grub-pest that pervaded the mesa slopes adjoining the Bay. But this single record of the Eskimo Curlew is, as far as I can learn, the first for this southern coast. The bird was in good plumage, but apparently ill at ease and flying alone—perhaps a straggler which came with the early flocks of the Long-billed Curlew and Willet.—GODFREY HOLTERHOFF, *National City. Cal.*

Nesting of the Little Black Rail in Connecticut.—On the evening of the 13th of July, 1876, one of my neighbors called in to ask me if I cared for a set of Rail's eggs. I did not care very much, as Virginia Rails are very common here, but on inquiry as to what variety he had found, he replied that he could not tell. He had been mowing at the Cove meadows and his scythe had decapitated a Rail sitting on her nest of nine eggs, and he had placed the remains of the bird and eggs—some of them broken—aside for me. I was greatly surprised when I beheld what he had brought me, so totally unlike were they to anything I had ever seen, and it was only after considerable research that I discovered that I possessed something very rare—eggs of the Little Black Rail (*Porzana jamaicensis*). Some of these specimens I sent to my friend, Mr. H. A. Purdie of Boston, for confirmation of their identity, and an account of the find was inserted in the 'Bulletin' of January, 1877. The other specimens I retained in my collection, with no anticipation that opportunity would ever recur for duplicating them. But on the 6th of June, 1884, I made a trip to 'Great Island'—a tract of salt meadow near the mouth of the Connecticut River, on its eastern shore—in search of nests of *Ammodromi* which abound in that locality. During a very successful hunt for them I observed a tuft of green grass carefully woven and interlaced together, too artificially to be the work of nature. 'Merely another Finch's nest,' I mused, as I carefully parted the green bower overhanging it. But wasn't there an extra and audible beat to my pulse when before my astonished gaze lay three beautiful Little Black Rail's eggs? Recovering from my surprise I carefully replaced the

disarranged curtain that excluded the sun from the precious eggs, fixed some permanent ranges, and quietly departed to await the completion of the set. A week later, on the 13th of June, I again visited the nest and found therein the full complement of nine eggs.

This nest was situated about forty rods back from the shore of the river, on the moist meadow, often overflowed by the spring tides. The particular spot had not been mowed for several years, and the new grass, springing up through the old, dry, accumulated growths of previous years, was thick, short, and not over eight or ten inches in height—a fine place for Rails to glide unseen among its intricacies. The nest after the complement of eggs were deposited in it resembled that of the common Meadow Lark, it consisting of fine meadow grasses loosely put together, with a covering of the standing grasses woven over it and a passage and entrance at one side. The eggs also have a general resemblance to the Lark's, but differ in several points, being smaller and of a duller white, without the gloss usual on the Lark's. The spots are also smaller than the ordinary markings on the Lark's eggs. In size I find them as follows: No. 1, 1.04 × .81 inches; No. 2, 1.04 × .81; No. 3, 1.04 × .79; Nos. 4 and 5, 1.00 × .80; No. 6, 1.00 × .81; No. 7, 1.02 × .80; No. 8, .98 × 81; No. 9, .97 × .80.

Compared with other Rail's eggs, they most resemble in general color those of the Virginia Rail, but the markings are much smaller as well as much more numerous; two of the specimens have, however, large spots, like Virginia Rail's, at the large end; but in the majority the spots are small and abundant. The difference between the two ends, if any, is very slight, the eggs being much less elongated than those of any other Rail I have seen.

I found a Lark's nest the same day within two rods of this Rail's nest, and not very far from it a Virginia Rail's nest. Taking one of the nine eggs therein for comparison, I find it measures 1.30 × .98 inches; rather larger than the average of the species.

I must add an account of my efforts to secure the Little Black Rail with the set. I devoted the whole day to this special end, and visited the nest about every half hour through the day, approaching it with every possible caution, and having a little tuft of cotton directly over the nest to indicate the exact spot; but although I tried it from every quarter with the utmost diligence and watchfulness, I was never able to obtain the slightest glimpse of the bird—never perceived the slightest quiver of the surrounding grass to mark her movements as she glided away, and yet I found the eggs warm every time, indicating that she had but just left them.—JOHN N. CLARK, *Saybrook, Ct.*

The Widgeon in Maine in February.—On the 20th of February last Mr. T. B. Davis, the gunsmith of this city, showed me a recently killed male specimen of the Widgeon (*Mareca americana*), which had been forwarded to him for preservation by a sportsman of Freeport, Maine. The bird had been dead several days. February, 1884, will be remembered as